fifteen children, yet she is represented young and beautiful, as when Edward first wedded her. But all her beauty and grace and virtues have not secured the marble of her tomb from decay, nor the bronzes from abstraction; the very wand or sceptre has been stolen from between her graceful fingers, and the jewels from the crown which encircles her head. The statue and its accompaniments are of brass, once partially enamelled and profusely covered with devices of Castile and England, but obscured by the crust of dirt which now conceals them. May the present century, thou beauteous noble-hearted daughter of Castile, render thee the justice and respect which were shown thee by thy well-beloved husband!

It appears from the contract, which still exists, that Richard de Coverdale undertook the marble-work of this tomb, and W. Torrell, the goldsmith, the statue, which was completed in 1292. It would be important for the history of English art to ascertain, if possible, whether Torrell, if not himself an Italian, as is supposed by some with an easy modification of the name, making it Torelli not merely Torrell, may have employed, as is done now-a-days, some distinguished English or foreign artist, most probably an Italian, to model and execute the bronze-work; for we need not necessarily conclude, because the contract was taken by a goldsmith, he was himself competent to design the figure, although he may have had all the conveniences for the mere mechanical operation of casting it. Edward I. endowed the Abbey with lands, then valued at 200*l.* per annum, for maintaining the worship and religious rites connected with the tomb, but these possessions were confiscated at the time of the Reformation, 250 years after.

It is unnecessary for me to make more than a passing allusion to the alabaster* tomb of Queen Philippa. The appeals that have been made to the public to raise funds for its restoration, and the exquisite specimen of the work, which was one of the attractions of the Great Exhibition, will have made you familiar with the value of this monument as a work of art.

We next come to the cenotaph of the heroic Edward III. which is on the south side, immediately opposite to that of Henry III. This is a magnificent memorial, consisting of a lower pedestal, 4 ft. high, next the aisle, divided into four quatre-foiled panels with highly elaborated tracery, having central metal shields exquisitely enamelled and emblazoned with the arms of England and France. This pedestal is surmounted by the altar or pedestal tomb, which has on each side six canopied niches; to these are still attached the bronze figures, 18 inches high, richly enamelled on the surface. The tomb is of Petworth marble, the architectural enrichments being generally decayed, yet enough remains to supply authorities for every portion. The venerable figure is of brass, of noble features, and flowing beard; the ensigns of royalty, which he once held, are destroyed. He is surrounded by a recumbent bronze-tabernacle of elaborate tracery with numerous figures beautifully cast and wrought; and although many portions are deficient, yet they exist in other parts, and with little expense might be replaced. There is above the tomb a richly worked oak canopy, almost entire, and wanting little to restore it to its original splendour. Yet scanty as the sum would be to render this tomb as perfect as when it was first put up, the spirit is wanting to render this tribute to the Conqueror of Cressy, the father of the Black Prince, to him who won the field of Poictiers, the founder of the Order of the Garter, and who erected Windsor Castle. On the margin of the table the aged monarch is described as "the glory of England, the flower of past kings, the type for future ones—a clement king, the peace-giver to his people."

The interspace between the next pillars is occupied by the tomb of the unfortunate Richard II. and of his Queen Ann of Bohemia. It is of like design with that of Edward III. of the same materials, and possibly executed by the same artist. The surface of the marble is frightfully perished, and all the elaborate tracery, tabernacle work, buttresses, and finials present a time-worn surface, in many parts wholly defaced, and all the sixteen metal statuettes are gone! The recumbent brass statues of himself and queen lie side by side, once gilt and covered with worked devices. The arms and hands of himself and queen, and the sceptres and ball and cross, which they held, are wanting, as also the lions, leopard, and eagle, which once lay couchant at their feet. The masses of the recumbent tabernacles alone exist, despoiled of their enrichments and side pillars, or buttresses and angels. The bare arch of the oak canopy remains without the carved work, which embellished the summit, and the cornice and upper range of battlements. The colours with which they once glowed and which gave expression and relief are now tarnished or defaced, but still the soffit of the canopy displays unmistakeable evidences or traces of pictures with religious or historical subjects of considerable size.

Is it not mean-spirited and ignoble in a nation such as ours, to suffer so fine a work of art to decay, and such dishonour to be done to the unfortunate son of the Black Prince, the glory of England's chivalry?

The tomb of the gallant Henry V. the hero of Agincourt, occupies the east end of the sanctuary, under a stone canopy, which forms the chantry. As we know that oak chantries were not unusual (witness that at St. Albans), and as it was customary to have one in sanctuaries, which contained the tombs or shrines of saints, I am led to think that possibly in this part might have been an old oak chantry, and that Henry V. finding all the spaces between the piers occupied by the tombs of royal personages, and anxious to be placed in the regal circle around the shrine, may have assumed this place to himself, and replaced the wood chantry with a stone one; yet so arranged as to form at the same time a superb canopy to his own tomb.

The architecture of this cenotaph is not so much damaged as many others. This, I think, arises from its being enclosed by the substructions of the chantry and the ceiling, which protects it from the damp. But the sculptured groups, whether of stone or metal, which once filled the deep recesses of the sides, are stolen. The wood block of the figure and frame, on which it rests, were once covered with a more precious metal, tradition says silver; the carving shews the parts and drapery very completely, but the head, which it is said was of pure silver, is gone. The open iron railing and gates, enclosing the west end of the mausoleum, are a most curious specimen of elaborately-wrought metal work. They were once removed, but have since been most judiciously replaced by the Dean and Chapter.

Two modest marble caskets, once enriched with bronzes, contained the infant remains of daughters of Edward IV. and of Henry VII.—"Quam longa una dies, ætas tam longa rosarum"—with simple moulded plinth, die, and cornice. But one is almost fallen to pieces, and the slabs, which a few shillings might secure, are dilapidated and falling to ruin.

The sword and shield, which were borne before the heroic Edward III. in France on those battle-fields, whose names are "familiar in our mouths as household words,"* are here exhibited. The helmet, shield, and saddle of Henry V. are still attached to the pillars above his tomb. Dusty, dirty, torn and distorted, these memorials of Cresy and Agincourt seem only worthy (apart from their mighty traditions) of an old metal shop.

The throne on which our present august Sovereign was crowned, as also most of her predecessors, shares the same neglect, and has alike been despoiled of its finials, its crockets and carvings. A thin coating of plaister shows where the painter's art once shone in all its glory. The other is of doubtful origin, and patched up in a bastard taste with panels of Italian design. *Proh pudor!*

Having thus briefly noticed the tombs around the shrine, we will now proceed to consider the tomb of the Confessor himself; not that I would seek to revive a worship which every Protestant must hold to be superstitious, but I know not why we should deny to the tomb of a holy and pious man that respect which has never been withheld from by-gone worth. And surely, apart from religious considerations, and on historical grounds, we may desire the restoration of so ancient a monument of art and the preservation of a memorial of a much tried and devout monarch.

THE SHRINE OF EDWARD THE CONFESSOR.

This tomb of the most eminently pious of our kings is as melancholy a fragment of royalty as can be well imagined. Placed in the centre of this sanctuary, it rises the most prominent object of the whole of the royal and sacred shrines, and is at the same time the most humbling witness to our shame. A more august yet pitiable memento of the transitory nature of all earthly greatness cannot be conceived. For a cumbrous shapeless mass, stripped of its sparkling mosaics, despoiled of its elaborately enriched columns, its summit superseded by a subsequent incongruous architectural termination, itself in ruins, now contains the relics of the holiest of our line of monarchs, round which kings and nobles, the various states of the realm and the city of London in its palmiest days, were wont to come and pray and tender their choicest offerings. It seems as if the zealous Protestant, in horror of superstitious worship, were willing to cover with dishonour even the tomb of his kings, however eminent their piety, however noble their character, however beneficial their wisdom had been to fair and bonny England in ages past.

I must quote this as a solitary instance that remains in this kingdom, and one of only a few still extant in Christian Europe, which retains somewhat of the form and substance even of a stately shrine. Where is now that glory of England, the shrine of her protomartyr St. Alban? of St. Cuthbert at Durham? of the imperious A'Beckett at Canterbury? and so many others that I might quote, once the religious pride of our country?

This tomb is oblong in plan, with a column at each angle, which were twisted and the spiral flutings filled with mosaics. The capitals were of early lancet character painted and gilt. On each side are three recessed trefoil-headed niches, and one at the east end, in which were probably exposed the other sacred relics presented to the shrine. The whole surface was covered with elaborate geometric figures, sunk in the stone, and filled in with exquisite mosaic of the Byzantine character, and glistening with gold, red, green, and blue, many sparkling fragments of which have still been spared. One capital alone remains "in situ." Fragmental portions of two large shafts still exist, and support a large slab, 5 feet 4½ inches long by 3 feet 4½ inches high, filled with mosaics, interlaced in geometric forms, and probably placed, where it now is, upon the suppression of the shrine-worship at the reformation. The panels consist of porphyry and green marble. Up to the cornice we may consider that the feretry presents the main mass of the original design of the time of Henry III. (1269.) But it appears that at the period of James II. an upper division in wainscot was added, consisting of two stories of arches, pilasters, and entablatures of Italian or Palladian architecture, parts of which were inlaid with Marqueterie-work, in imitation of the mosaics of the lower division. And at this period, probably, it was endeavoured to repair the dilapidated state of the antique work, by filling up the parts whence the mosaics had been abstracted with plaister, and painting the surface in imitation of mosaic work.

On examining the floor at the west end of the shrine, there are evidences of the space occupied by the altar, where daily masses were said. And I am led to presume, that the large tablet now upraised on the truncated columns formed the front of the altar.

In order to enable us to appreciate the original design of the shrine, I would venture to offer a suggestion as to the appearance of this

* It is curious to remark that the alabaster monuments in Westminster Abbey have better resisted the corroding effects of the damp atmosphere than the Petworth marble, and that the deterioration of those memorials arises entirely from wanton mischief.

* Henry VI. Act iv. Sc. iv.

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